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ACTION IO-14

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TAGS: UNGA, EGEN, SOCI

SUBJ: 29TH GA--HMG'S POSITION ON ISSUES BEFORE THIRD

COMMITTEE (SOCIAL, HUMANITARIAN AND CULTURAL)

REF: USUN 2302

1. SUMMARY. IN CURRENT SESSION OF UNGA THIRD COMITE TOP PRIORITY ISSUES FOR HMG WILL BE SAME AS THOSE FOR EC9: TORTURE AND RELIGIOUS INTOLERANCE. FOREIGN SECRETARY CALLAGHAN MAY REFER TO TORTURE ISSUE IN HIS PLENARY SPEECH. UK ALSO INTENDS INTRODUCE LOW-KEY RES DESIGNED TO INITIATE PROCESS OF STRENGTHENING UN MACHINERY FOR SAFEGUARDING HUMAN RIGHTS. REFLECTING LABOR PARTY'S TRADITIONAL INTEREST IN HUMANITARIAN MATTERS, UK DEL WILL ADOPT MORE POSITIVE APPROACH TO HUMAN RIGHTS THAN IN RECENT PAST, A CHANGE IN EMPHASIS REFLECTED BY APPOINTMENT OF LADY GAITSKELL, PRESTIGIOUS HUMANITARIAN LEADER, TO REPRESENT HMG IN THIRD COMITE. END SUMMARY.

2. IN MEETING UK MISOFF DAVID BROAD EXPLAINED HMG'S POSITIONS ON ISSUES BEFORE THIRD COMITE. SINCE HMG'S
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POSITIONS LARGELY PARALLEL THOSE OF THE REST OF EC9,
THIS TELEGRAM REPRESENTS UPDATE OF REFTEL. AS EXPLAINED

BY BROAD, LABORITIES TRADITIONALLY MORE CONCERNED WITH HUMAN-ITARIAN ISSUES THAN CONSERVATIVES AND, PROVIDING LABOR PARTY RE-ELECTED IN OCTOBER AS ANTICIPATED, UK DEL WILL PROJECT HIGHER PROFILE IN THIRD COMITE THAN IN RECENT PAST. AS IF SYMBOLIZING THIS CHANGE IN ATTITUDE, LABOR GOVT HAS APPOINTMENT AS UK PUBLIC MEMBER IN THIRD COMITE LADY GAITSKELL, WIDOW OF FAMOUS LABOR LEADER AND JURIST, BARON HUGH GEITSKELL, AND ENERGETIC ADVOCATE OF HUMANITARIAN CAUSES IN HER OWN RIGHT. HER QUALIFICATIONS FOR THIS ROLE CONTRAST MARKEDLY WITH THOSE OF HER PREDECESSOR IN LAST YEAR'S THIRD COMITE.

3. TORTURE REMAINS HIGHEST PRIORITY ISSUE FOR UK AND FONSEC CALLAGHAN MAY MAKE SPECIFIC MENTION OF IT IN HIS SPEECH BEFORE GA. IN ACCORDANCE WITH STRATEGY OUTLINED REFTTEL, UK WILL NOT, HOWEVER, GET OUT IN FRONT BY COSPONSORING RES AT EARLY STAGE BUT WILL LEAVE THAT TO MORE NEUTRAL WESTERN COUNTRIES, SWEDEN, AUSTRIA, IRELAND AND NETHERLANDS. SWEDES CURRENTLY PLANNING TO BRING THEIR MINISTER OF JUSTICE TO NY TO INTRODUCE RES ON TORTURE (DRAFT COPY POUCHED IO/UNP HEWITT), RES WILL BE INTRODUCED UNDER ITEM 12, REPORT OF ECOSOC, WITH REFERENCE TO RES 3059 (XXVIII). PRESENT FOUR COSPONSORS ARE SEEKING COSPONSORS AMONG OTHER REGIONAL GROUPS. UK WILL JOIN COSPONSORS AT LATER DATE SO THAT HMG WILL BE ON RECORD WITH ITS HUMAN RIGHTS CONSTITUENCY.

4. UK, WHICH HAS ALWAYS BEEN STAUNCH SUPPORTER OF EFFORTS TO DRAW UP DECLARATION ON ELIMINATION OF ALL FORMS OF RELIGIOUS INTOLERANCE, WILL CONTINUE TO PRESS HARD ON THIS ISSUE UNDER AGENDA ITEM 55. NETHERLANDS WILL INTRODUCE UPDATED VERSION OF DRAFT DECLARATION THAT IT INTRODUCED INTO THIRD COMITE LAST YEAR (COPY POUCHED IO/UNP HEWITT) AND UK WILL SUPPORT IT. PRESENT STRATEGY AGREED AMONG EC9 IS TO HAVE CHAIRMAN OF THIRD COMITE SET UP FORMAL WORKING GROUP OF 27 CHOSEN ON GEOGRAPHICAL BASIS. MISOFF STATED FOR RECORD THAT US WOULD, OF COURSE, WISH TO BE ON ANY SUCH WG, BUT SINCE US HAS PROBABLY BEEN MOST ACTIVE SUPPORTER OF NETHERLANDS INITIATIVE, THIS IS FOREGONE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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CONCLUSION.

5. HUMAN RIGHTS IN ARMED CONFLICT: PROTECTION OF JOURNALISTS ENGAGED IN DANGEROUS MISSIONS IN AREAS OF ARMED CONFLICT, AGENDA ITEM 53. FRENCH WHO FATHERED THIS ITEM WHEN EX-JOURNALIST SCHUMANN WAS FONMIN, NOW QUOTE WILLING TO DISPOSE OF IT QUIETLY BY HAVING IT REFERRED TO NEXT SESSION OF DIPLOMATIC CONFERENCE TO BE HELD IN GENEVA UNDER AUSPICES OF INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE OF THE RED CROSS (ICRC). THIS WAS IN FACT DISPOSITION MADE OF IT AT 28TH GA BUT CONFERENCE

NEVER GOT AROUND TO CONSIDERING IT WHEN IT CONVENED EARLY
THIS YEAR. TO AVOID EMBARRASSMENT FRENCH WILL SEEK FRIENDLY
THIRD WORLD COUNTRY TO MOVE REQUISITE RES.

6. ELIMINATION OF ALL FORMS OF RACIAL DISCRIMINATION,
AGENDA ITEM 54. IN DEBATE ON DECADE FOR ACTION TO COMBAT
RACISM AND RACIAL DISCRIMINATION UK DEL WILL MAKE GENERAL
STATEMENT WITH RESERVATIONS CONCERNING THE CONVENTION ON
APARTHEID AND ON EFFORTS TO ISOLATE RATHER THAN TO INFLUENCE
SOUTH AFRICA. THIS YEAR, HOWEVER, UK WILL CHANGE THIS SOMEWHAT
NEGATIVE FORMAT BY BEING MORE EMPHATIC ABOUT NEED FOR SOUTH
AFRICA TO RESPOND BY CHANGING ITS ATTITUDES.

7. UK DEL INTENDS INTRODUCE LOW-KEY RES DESIGNED TO INITIATE
WHAT IT RECOGNIZES WILL BE LONG PROCESS OF STRENGTHENING
UN MACHINERY FOR SAFEGUARDING HUMAN RIGHTS. UK DEL HAS
NOT MADE ANY CHANGE IN DRAFT RES CALLING UPON SYG TO PREPARE
PAPER SUMMARIZING EXISTING UN HUMAN RIGHTS MACHINERY,
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